

there will be a new Prime Minister that we will be told we should stake our hopes on.

There was a front-page story in the Baltimore Sun yesterday that said that 20,000-some new troops heading to Iraq will have to go with the old, lesser armored vehicles, the flat-bottomed HMMWVs, because the new V-hulled transports that deflect the power of a roadside bomb or a land mine are not available in sufficient numbers because the money has not been available to bring the production lines up to where they need to be to have them ready.

It just bespeaks of the same incompetent planning, the same lack of thorough thinking of the problem through that leaves us with six fluent Arabic-speaking translators in the embassy according to the Baker-Hamilton Report.

If you believe our national intelligence estimate from this past fall that says all 16 of our intelligence agencies in this country report that so far the Iraq war has created more terrorists than it has disposed of, where is the logic in continuing that war? Where is the logic in escalating that war?

I would like to see a surge of interpreters and a surge of religious and historical experts in the region and a surge of trained negotiators, and I would like to see a surge of diplomacy, of us treating other countries as sovereigns and talking to them. There are a couple of examples of that working.

One might remember, for instance, a President from the other side of the aisle from me, President Reagan going to South Africa which at the time was a rogue state that had nuclear weapons, and I was on the side that was saying, Let's sanction them. Let's not talk to them. And let's cut off all interaction. And what he called constructive engagement was sending ballet troupes and sending artists and having as much commercial and cultural exchange as possible to bring them to our way of thinking. It worked in that case, a nuclear power disarmed. And I would like to see that kind of emphasis and diplomacy returned to our country's foreign policy.

ESCALATION OF TROOPS IN IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. HONDA) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, the Nation brought in the new year by marking a somber milestone: the 3,000th fallen American combatant in Iraq. In response, the President proposes to send even more of a failed and dangerous policy.

How much more heartbreak must American families suffer before the President comes to see what the rest of the Nation has long known: His Iraq policy is an utter failure, one that makes our country less and less secure

with each passing day, all at the expense of the flower of our youth. How long before the President realizes that each fallen soldier, sailor, aviator, and marine is a valuable, cherished human being and not just a checkmark on a deployment order? How long will President Bush continue to ignore the demands of American voters who have clearly demanded a new direction?

Mr. President, I have asked before and I will ask again now: Why?

These policies of escalation have been tried in the past in Iraq. The results speak for themselves: 3,000 brave men and women return home in body bags, their families and friends left with nothing but memories; over 22,000 more returning home injured, their lives never the same.

America's credibility around the world and its domestic security have been dangerously eroded. We have plunged Iraq into a civil war, further destabilizing an already precarious region. All this while, at home the civil rights of American citizens are slowly being degraded, often without congressional oversight.

On November 7, 2006, the American people spoke loud and clear. They demanded a new direction.

This escalation is not a new direction. It is a slap in the face to all Americans. And the fact that the President began committing new troops in Iraq before Congress had a chance to respond to his new plan is an insult to this body and an insult to the people who elected us to lead our country in a new direction.

Mr. President, you have claimed that you wanted to start this year off in a spirit of bipartisanship and collegiality. As an equal partner, Congress deserves it, America deserves it and, most importantly, our troops deserve it.

THE WAR IN IRAQ NEEDS TO END, NOT ESCALATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ROTHMAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, last night President Bush told the American people that he bore responsibility for the many mistakes made in the prosecution of the war in Iraq. Then he announced that he planned to make another mistake: He planned to escalate and expand the war in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, the President said he intends to send more than 20,000 U.S. service men and women into Iraq and indefinitely. As has been the case with so many military strategic and diplomatic decisions made by this President regarding Iraq, tragically, this too would be a terrible error. This open-ended commitment of more U.S. troops will result in the death and wounding of thousands more American soldiers, cost U.S. taxpayers tens of billions of dollars more, and do nothing to help the Iraqi people resolve their civil war.

In fact, this escalation will turn up the heat on the already boiling anti-American fanaticism in Iraq and in the region.

The President's plan also weakens our severely overstretched and depleted military, and it limits our ability to face the current and future conflicts, future threats to our country.

In summary, President Bush's escalation and expansion of the war in Iraq will hurt America's national security, and I will work with all of my colleagues here to do all that we can to make sure that the President's plan does not get allowed to be funded.

Our country has sacrificed deeply to help the Iraqi people already by removing their murderous dictator Saddam Hussein from power, by training their military, spending billions of our money to rebuild their infrastructure, and by supporting them so that they could develop a democratic government.

If we owed the Iraqi people a moral obligation after we deposed their dictator and started this war, Mr. Speaker, we have long since met that moral obligation.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, the United States must now simply, but importantly, remove all of our troops from Iraq without delay. We must rebuild our military and let the world know that we are ready to counter the real threats to our national security, current and future.

Let me add one more thing, Mr. Speaker. I am delighted that my friend and colleague MAXINE WATERS from California will be engaging in a Special Order on Iraq and the necessity for withdrawing our troops from Iraq. I am unable to participate in that Special Order and look forward to participating and working with her under her leadership in the very near future.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRABACHER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. ROHRABACHER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) is recognized for 5 minutes.